



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Stevensville Ranger District

88 Main Street
Stevensville, MT 59870
406-777-5461

File Code: 1920/2400-3

Date: February 13, 2007

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Itavalli County Commissioners

Dear Interested Party:

The Bitterroot National Forest is proposing a personal and commercial mushroom harvest program. This is following the wildfires of last summer which burned over 8,500 acres in the Gash Creek and Sweathouse Creek areas on the Stevensville Ranger District. Forest personnel are considering a number of options during the development of the program based on the objectives of providing reasonable opportunities for both personal use and commercial operations while minimizing the social and resource impacts.

Approximately 4,400 (non-wilderness) acres of the Gash Creek fire area will be designated as commercial and personal use harvest areas. No harvesting will be allowed inside the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Personal use harvesting will require a permit, but there will be no permit fee, nor restrictions on harvest locations or camping for personal use harvesters. Personal use mushrooms must be split and cannot be sold. Personal use permits will be available at all Bitterroot National Forest offices.

Commercial permit fees for the Gash Creek fire area will be a minimum of \$20 for a seven day permit and up to \$100 for a seasonal permit. Commercial permits will only be available at the Stevensville Ranger District office. Maps and additional information will be available in the spring.

There will be no camping allowed on the Bitterroot National Forest for people involved in commercial harvesting operations. Roads that are normally closed to motorized use will not be opened to accommodate access for harvesting.

The Bitterroot National Forest is hosting an open house to discuss the permitting process for anyone interested in commercial and personal mushroom harvesting this spring and summer. The open house will be held at the Bitterroot National Forest Office at 1801 North 1st Street in Hamilton, on Thursday, February 22nd from 4:00 – 7:00 PM.

Forest officials will explain the permitting process for both commercial and personal harvest at this open house. Information regarding the price structure for commercial permits and specific locations where commercial harvesting is allowed will be available.



If you have questions or comments about the proposed mushroom harvesting program, please contact Elizabeth Ballard at the Stevensville Ranger District, 88 Main, Stevensville, MT 59870, phone 777-5461. Comments are due by close of business on March 15, 2007.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Daniel G. Ritter".A handwritten word in cursive script, appearing to read "for".

DANIEL G. RITTER
District Ranger

If you have questions or comments about the proposed mushroom harvesting program, please contact Elizabeth Ballard at the Stevensville Ranger District, 88 Main, Stevensville, MT 59870, phone 777-5461. Comments are due by close of business on March 15, 2007.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert Brassfield".A handwritten word in cursive script, appearing to read "for".

DANIEL G. RITTER
District Ranger